appearing in the 'Economic Times' dated 13th July, 1998, regarding the proposed army and naval exercises between India and the US which have been put on hold following nuclear tests but those with Pakistan will be held as scheduled next months, as per Washington Post report;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto and the details thereof; and

(c) the details of action taken/ proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Consequent upon the underground nuclear explosions undertaken by India on May 11 and 13, 1998 the spokesman of the US Department of Defence announced cessation of all military exchanges and training exercises with India. In the light of this announcement, no armed force or defence-related exchanges with the USA, including joint naval exercises, are anticipated in the foreseeable future. the daily "Washington Post" has allegedly reported that US military exercises with Pakistan will take place as scheduled in August, 1998. Government of India will take a view on the resumption of military exchanges and exercises with USA after it takes the initiative to re-establish all streams of defence cooperation with India.

Think Tank Organisation

4616. SHRI VED PRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of think tank organisations India have on national security on the lines of USA, which has a developed think tank culture regarding strategic planning relevant to national security and at China, which has been able to develop strong think tanks;

(b) the name of Indian think tank organisations, their functions and area of operation;

(c) whether Government propose to take any step to further promote the think tank organisations relevant to national security; even in non-Governmental organisations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) There are numerous organisations in India which focus on national security matters wholly or in part including the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), the United Services Institution of India, the Forum for Strategic and Security Studies, the Centre for Policy Research, the Institute for Chinese Studies, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, the Centre for Advanced Strategic Studies and the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Government endeavour to encourage the activities of think tank organisations through several deliberate measures such as financial assistance, promoting linkages with counterpart organisations, involvement in events like seminars and symposia, etc.

(e) Does not arise.

Indo-Russian defence cooperation

4617. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russia have finalised a new 10th Year defence cooperation agreement; and

(b) if so, the broad features of the new cooperation agreement, especially relating to hardware supplies, technology transfer and joint ventures?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) During the visit of the then Raksha Mantri to Russia in October, 1997 both India and Russia agreed, in principle, to extend the existing Long Term Programme of Military Technical Co-operation between the two countries, beyond December, 1999 and up to the year 2010. The draft text of the Agreement was finalised during the visit of Defence Secretary to Russia from 15—19 June, 1998. The draft text provides for the mechanism for implementing and monitoring the long-term programme of military technical co-operation. It will not be in the interest of national security to disclose details of activities under the Military Technical Co-operation between the two countries.

Using IAF aircraft for non-official purposes

4618. SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state the penalties that are prescribed for a Minister or offcial of his Ministry who uses IAF Aircraft for non-official purposes and misrepresent them to have been Official?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): If an official journey is later proved to be a non-official one, recovery proceedings can be initiated by the appropriate competent authority.

Recovering of IAF aircraft expenditure

4619. SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state whether there is any provision of law under which Government may waive responsibility of recovering the expenditure incurred on IAF aircraft by the Defence Minister for non-official journeys unconnected with the work of the Defence Ministry?:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): The rules in force state that no recoveries will be made only in cases in which the Prime Minister considers it desirable that airlifts should be provided free of charge for reasons of state.

Jawans to distinguish alien aircrafts

4620. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the surveillance system on the aircraft flying in the insurgency-ridden North-East has been revamped;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any specialised training has been given to jawans to distinguish between our own and the alien aircraft?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Surveillance System in the North-East has been improved. However, in the interest of national security it will not be desirable to disclose the details in this regard.

Defence radar system on Western Coast

4621. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether radar system of Navy and other defence forces on Western Coast is not functioning properly;

(b) whether the warning of coming cyclone approaching west coast that caused havoc on 9th June, 1998 in Kandla in Gujarat was not noticed on radar system; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to ensure proper functioning of radar system on Western Coast of the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (d) The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force do not have dedicated weather radars. Such radars are normally operated by the India Meteorological